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historiography epitomized by early twentieth century writer Heinrich Vedeer. The chapters in this part as a whole are probably of widest interest, as they contain much on topical issues including ethnic identity and the relation between history and ethnography.

The final part consists of four papers, generally on quite narrow but illuminating topics concerning Ovamboland. These are by Harri Siiskonen, who gives a comparative study of migration in two parishes; Meredith McKittrick on generational struggles and social mobility; Wolfram Hartmann on Iipumbu ya Tshilongo, rulers of the Ovakwambi; and Randolph Vinge on the Namibia-Angola boundary dispute. (This last chapter begins with a brief but moving oral account by the late Petrus Ndongo, schoolteacher and local historian.) Siiskonen's chapter highlights the level of detail contained in the mission sources, which he brings to bear on the subject of migration especially during the 'famine of the dams'. Yet for me, it is Hartmann's which best illuminates the complex relations between colonial 'pacification', the coming of Christianity, class formation, changing attitudes concerning sex and gender, and the significance of individual leaders and single events.

The book contains an excellent bibliography for the volume as a whole, a short glossary, some nice photographs and six maps. Unfortunately, most of the maps are not very well produced. Certainly they will mean little to those readers who do not already have a good knowledge of Namibian geography. That said, the book is packed with detail and with material which should interest not just Namibia specialists, but also many others who simply want to know how the Namibian people withstood the crucial first thirty years of South African occupation. The period is not as much written about as either the colonial period or recent times, but it is central both to the understanding of ethnicity in that country and to the appreciation of modern Namibia as nation.

University of Edinburgh ALAN BARNARD

The Livingstones at Kolobeng 1847–1852, by Janet Wagner Parsons. The Botswana Society and Pula Press, Gaborone, 1997. xiv+230 pp. £25.00. ISBN Botswana Press 99912-60-17X; ISBN Pula Press 99912-61-44-3

It is surely remarkable that, amongst the many studies of David Livingstone which have been published since his death in 1873, none has examined adequately the significance for Livingstone's life and legend of the period which he, his wife Mary and his emerging family spent at Kolobeng in the land now known as Botswana. An important start was made on this subject by Professor I. Schapera in his invaluable editions of Livingstone's correspondence and papers, notably in his incisive account of the Boer sack of Kolobeng in 1852, in his publication for the Van Riebeeck Society of Cape Town in 1974 and Livingstone's South African Papers. But it has taken almost half a century since then for a scholar to rise to the total challenge of Kolobeng.

Janet Wagner Parsons has more than scholarly qualifications for this neglected task. The experience of bringing up four children in often out-of-the-way parts of Africa has given her the necessary empathy for entering into the trauma of Mary and David Livingstone's struggle to raise a family in remote, drought-ridden and politically disturbed Kolobeng. One of their six children, Elizabeth, died only two weeks after her birth in this God-forsaken (as David Livingstone came to see it) region of the Bakwena. On this distressing episode, Janet Parsons comments, 'The Bakwena, who had lost many children of their own and buried them,

witnessed now the first Christian burial in their country. The grave mound would not be obliterated to hide it from sorcerers, they were told. Instead, stones would be heaped into a cairn to protect the grave contents from hyenas. The *monare*—David Livingstone—placed on it a grave marker that declared—for their need or his—Christian faith in defiance of desolation: 'When men die they are not annihilated; Jesus will raise and judge all' (p. 111).

In such evocative prose, and with thorough documentation and detailed knowledge of local history and topography, Janet Parsons describes and discusses Kolobeng, the third missionary base from which Livingstone made increasingly desperate attempts, frequently accompanied by his often pregnant wife and weakly children, to bring the Gospel to the indigenous inhabitants of Southern Africa. The story of his one and only convert, Sechele, Chief of the Bakwena, has too often been told as if it were due to the limitations of Livingstone's evangelical energy and techniques. Janet Parsons, however, puts this distortion of his Christian missionary endeavour into a much-needed fresh perspective.

Similarly, without resorting to the old-style hagiography of David Livingstone, she has redressed the balance of recent criticism that he was selfishly neglectful of his wife and children. He put them on to a ship for Britain at Cape Town in April 1852 and returned to Kolobeng to find that his house and possessions had been destroyed by a Boer commando. He went on to his epic journeys on foot across Africa. David Livingstone seems almost to have been acting out a destiny that had been decided for him by impersonal forces. As Janet Parsons says, 'The tragedy of Kolobeng was the wreckage of a family sacrificed to an ideal bound by its culture and time, the product of a missionary movement that has gone. Secularism has replaced evangelism. Self-realisation has replaced the personal sacrifice that claimed the lives of happiness of so many who, like Mary and her children, lived and served in the field' (p. 175).

Janet Wagner Parsons' book is effectively illustrated with contemporary pictures of the Livingstones, sensitive drawings by Mariette van Velden and Gillian Manning, and good maps by Berneck Makwiti and Brian Parsons. It has four scholarly appendices which the reader who is unfamiliar with southern African history and languages should find very helpful. Her 'Notes and Quotations' section contains some valuable material, notably on Livingstones's wayward son, Robert, who died in the American Civil War and was the subject of a revisionary discussion in the Royal African Society's Journal in 1934, and on medical history and David Livingstone, in which Parsons develops the pioneering work of Dr Oliver Ransford.

Her book is not only important for the study of the controversially creative lives of David and Mary Livingstone but also for the study of Sechele's statesmanship that built, it may be claimed, the foundations of modern Botswana. I found it a delight to read, particularly the extended epigraphs at the head of each chapter which sometimes contain touches of genuine poetry—a quality too often lacking in modern African studies.

University of Edinburgh GEORGE SHEPPERSON

Humphrey Gibbs: Beleaguered Governor. Southern Rhodesia, 1929–69, by Alan Megahey. Macmillan, London, 1998. xxii+241 pp. £35.00. ISBN 0-333-72158-6

With the exception of Christopher Soames' brief interlude overseeing the transition to independence in Zimbabwe in 1980, Humphrey Gibbs was the last